



Department of Defense INSTRUCTION

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ASD(FMP)

SUBJECT: Voluntary Education Programs

References: (a) DoD Directive 1322.8, "Voluntary Education Programs for Military Personnel," January 6, 1997
(b) Sections 2005 and 2007 of title 10, United States Code
(c) Section 1073 of Public Law 104-106, "National Defense Authorization Act, 1996," February 10, 1996

1. PURPOSE

This Instruction:

1.1. Implements policy, assigns responsibilities, and prescribes procedures under reference (a) for the operation of voluntary education programs in the Department of Defense.

1.2. Establishes the Interservice Voluntary Education Working Group.

2. APPLICABILITY

This Instruction applies to the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Military Departments (including the Coast Guard when it is operating as a Military Service in the Department of the Navy), and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (hereafter referred to collectively as "the DoD Components"). The term "Military Services," as used herein, refers to the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, and the Marine Corps.

3. DEFINITIONS

Terms used in this Instruction are defined in enclosure 1.

4. POLICY

It is DoD policy, under reference (a), that:

4.1. Members of the Armed Forces serving on active duty shall be afforded the opportunity to complete their high school education, earn an equivalency diploma, improve their academic skills or level of literacy, enroll in vocational and technical schools, receive college credit for military training and experience in accordance with the American Council on Education's GUIDE TO THE EVALUATION OF NONTRADITIONAL LEARNING EXPERIENCES IN THE ARMED FORCES, take tests to earn college credit, and enroll in postsecondary education programs that lead to associates, bachelor's, and graduate degrees.

4.2. Service members' costs to participate in Voluntary Education Programs shall be reduced through financial support, including tuition assistance that is administered uniformly across the Services.

4.3. Information and counseling about Voluntary Education Programs shall be readily available and easy to access so that Service members are encouraged to make maximum use of the educational opportunities that are available.

4.4. Accredited institutions shall be encouraged to provide degree programs on military installations and the Military Services shall facilitate their operations on the installations.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1. The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Force Management Policy, under the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, shall:

5.1.1. Monitor implementation of and ensure compliance with this Instruction and DoD Directive 1322.8 (reference (a)).

5.1.2. Establish rates of tuition assistance to ensure uniformity across the Services as required by reference (a) and this Instruction.

5.1.3. Establish, and provide a chairperson for, the Interservice Voluntary Education Working Group.

5.1.4. Maintain a program to assess the effectiveness of voluntary education programs on military installations.

5.1.5. Annually issue written policy guidance for the funding and operation of the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES).

5.2. The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs, under the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, shall:

5.2.1. Ensure compliance with this Instruction and reference (a).

5.2.2. Appoint a representative to serve on the Interservice Voluntary Education Working Group.

5.3. The Secretaries of the Military Departments shall:

5.3.1. Ensure compliance with this Instruction and reference (a).

5.3.2. Establish, maintain, and operate voluntary education programs that encompass a broad range of educational experiences including, but not limited to, academic skills development, high school completion programs, vocational and/or technical programs, and programs leading to the award of associate, bachelor's, and advanced academic degrees.

5.3.3. Ensure that sufficient funding is available to provide Service members with tuition assistance support consistent with the requirements in enclosure 2.

5.3.4. Ensure that educational counseling is available to Service members so that they will have sufficient information and guidance to plan an appropriate program of study.

5.3.5. Ensure command and installation participation in periodic comprehensive reviews of the quality and effectiveness of each installation's voluntary education program. The Military Installation Voluntary Education Review (MIVER) is the preferred vehicle for accomplishing such inspection and evaluation of an installation's program.

5.3.6. Provide an Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps representative to serve on the Interservice Voluntary Education Working Group.

5.3.7. Assign, on a rotating basis, a senior enlisted Service member in pay grade E-9 to serve as the DANTES enlisted advisor.

5.3.8. Ensure that military test control officers and centers comply with the policies and procedures published in the DANTES EXAMINATION PROGRAM HANDBOOK.

5.3.9. Ensure that personnel that provide counseling, advisement and program management related to voluntary education programs have access to the DoD voluntary education and other internet web sites so that they can provide current and accurate information to Service members.

5.3.10. Provide opportunities for Service members to access the internet to enroll in and complete postsecondary courses that are part of their approved educational plan leading to a degree.

6. PROCEDURES

6.1. The Interservice Voluntary Education Working Group shall:

6.1.1. Provide a forum for the exchange of information and discussion of issues related to voluntary education programs.

6.1.2. Develop recommendations for changes in policies and procedures.

6.1.3. Develop recommendations for DANTES' activities and operations that support voluntary education programs.

6.1.4. Be comprised of a chairperson from the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Force Management Policy; one representative from the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs; and one representative each from the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard. The Director, DANTES, shall serve ex officio.

6.1.5. Meet at least once each year to review DANTES' activities and contribute to the development of policy guidance for the forthcoming fiscal year. For

this meeting, the Director, DANTES, shall serve as executive secretary.

6.2. Voluntary Education Programs shall be established, maintained, and operated in keeping with the guidelines in enclosure 3.

6.3. On-base voluntary education programs and services shall be sought using procedures identified in enclosure 4.

6.4. Institutions interested in delivering education programs and services on military installations shall be selected based on the minimum criteria identified in enclosure 5.

6.5. High school programs, academic skills programs, and adult education programs for military personnel and their adult family members outside the United States shall be operated in accordance with guidance in enclosure 6.

6.6. The DANTES shall be administered in accordance with the mission, functions, and role identified in enclosure 7.

7. INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS

This Instruction authorizes use of the following forms:

7.1. DD Form 295, "Application for the Evaluation of Learning Experiences During Military Service."

7.2. DD Form 1572, "Test log (DANTES and Others)."

8. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Instruction is effective immediately.


F. Pang
Assistant Secretary of Defense
Force Management Policy

Enclosures - 7

1. Definitions
2. Tuition Assistance for Service Members Participating in Education Programs
3. Guidelines for Establishing, Maintaining and Operating Voluntary Education Programs
4. Procedures for Obtaining On-Base Voluntary Education Programs and Services
5. Minimum Criteria for Selecting Institutions to Deliver Higher Education Programs and Services on Military Installations
6. Other Education Programs for Service Members and Their Adult Family Members
7. Responsibilities of the DANTES

E1. ENCLOSURE 1

DEFINITIONS

E1.1.1. Academic. Having to do with general or liberal, rather than technical or vocational, education.

E1.1.2. Academic Skills. Competencies in English, reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, and computer skills that are essential to successful job performance and new learning. Also referred to as functional or basic skills.

E1.1.3. Education Center. A military installation facility, including office space, classrooms, laboratories and other features, that is staffed with professionally qualified personnel and used to conduct voluntary education programs.

E1.1.4. Military Installation Voluntary Education Review (MIVER). A third-party evaluation of voluntary education programs as they are implemented and operated at the installation level.

E1.1.5. Noncredit Course. A course that does not carry a credit award and cannot be used towards degree completion.

E1.1.6. Off-Duty Time. Time when the Service member is not scheduled to perform official duties.

E1.1.7. Program for Afloat College Education. An education program offered by the Navy on board ships, submarines and at selected shore sites. Contractor-provided academic skills instruction and college-level courses supporting degree programs are conducted in classrooms as well as through electronic delivery.

E1.1.8. Tuition Assistance. Funds provided by the Military Services to pay a percentage of the charges of an educational institution for the tuition of an active duty member of the Armed Forces enrolled in courses of study during his or her off-duty time.

E1.1.9. Voluntary Education Programs. Continuing, adult or postsecondary educational programs of study in which Service members elect to participate during their off-duty time.

E2. ENCLOSURE 2

TUITION ASSISTANCE FOR SERVICE MEMBERS PARTICIPATING IN EDUCATION PROGRAMS

E2.1.1. Tuition Assistance shall be available for Service members participating in high school completion and approved postsecondary education programs. (Approved courses are those that are part of an identified course of study leading to a postsecondary certificate or degree.)

E2.1.2. Tuition Assistance shall be applied at the rate of:

E2.1.2.1. One hundred percent of the cost of approved high school completion programs for Service members who have not been awarded a high school or equivalency diploma and who are enrolled in such programs.

E2.1.2.2. Not more than 75 percent of an institution's tuition and related instructional charges for each course in which a Service member enrolls, except that in the case of an enlisted member in the pay grade of E-5 or higher with less than 14 years' service, not more than 90 percent of the charges may be paid. The limitations in this paragraph do not apply to the Program for Afloat College Education.

E2.1.3. In accordance with section 2007(a)(3) of title 10, United States Code (reference (b)), tuition assistance is available to a commissioned officer on active duty only if the officer agrees to remain on active duty for a period of at least 2 years after the completion of the education or training for which tuition assistance was paid.

E2.1.4. In accordance with section 2007(c) of reference (b) tuition assistance is available to an officer in the Selected Reserve of the Army National Guard or the Army Reserve for education leading to a baccalaureate degree only if the officer agrees to remain a member of the Selected Reserve for at least 4 years after completion of the education for which tuition assistance was paid.

E2.1.5. Reimbursement for an unfulfilled tuition assistance obligation is required as stipulated in section 2005 of reference (b). Except in extenuating circumstances, students must complete courses with a passing grade to retain tuition assistance.

E2.1.6. Tuition assistance shall not be authorized for any course for which a Service member receives reimbursement in whole or in part from any other federal source when the payment would constitute a duplication of benefits. Payments from

other sources shall be applied first. Veteran's education benefits are not payable for courses paid in whole or in part by the Armed Forces. Institutions have a responsibility to ensure that students do not receive a duplication of benefits.

E2.1.7. Pell Grants may be used in conjunction with tuition assistance, including their use to pay that portion of tuition costs not covered by tuition assistance.

E2.1.8. Tuition Assistance shall be provided only for courses offered by postsecondary institutions accredited by a national or regional accrediting body recognized by the Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, or a successor organization.

E3. ENCLOSURE 3

GUIDELINES FOR ESTABLISHING, MAINTAINING AND OPERATING VOLUNTARY EDUCATION PROGRAMS

E3.1.1. Educational programs established under this Instruction by each Military Service shall:

E3.1.1.1. Provide for the academic, technical, intellectual, personal and professional development of Service members, thereby contributing to the readiness of the Armed Forces and the quality of life of Service members and their families.

E3.1.1.2. Increase Service members' opportunities for advancement and leadership by reinforcing their academic skills and occupational competencies with new skills and knowledge.

E3.1.1.3. Lead to a credential, such as a certificate, diploma, or college degree, signifying satisfactory completion of the educational program.

E3.1.1.4. Include an academic skills program, as required, that allows personnel to upgrade their reading, writing, computation, and communication abilities in support of military occupations and careers. Academic skills programs may include English as a Second Language and basic science.

E3.1.1.5. Include programs and course offerings that support findings from periodic needs assessments. Duplication of course offerings on an installation should be avoided. However, the availability of similar courses through correspondence or electronic delivery shall not be considered a duplication.

E3.1.1.6. Be described in a publication that includes all on-base educational programs and services available on the installation plus applicable programs available at nearby installations. Information about other applicable college and university courses offered nearby should be included.

E3.1.2. Each Military Service, in partnership with community educational service providers, shall provide support essential to operating effective educational programs. This support includes:

E3.1.2.1. Adequate funds for program implementation, administration, and tuition assistance.

E3.1.2.2. Adequately trained staff to determine program needs, counsel students, provide testing services, and procure educational programs and services.

E3.1.2.3. Adequate and appropriate classroom, laboratory, library, and office facilities and equipment, including computers.

E3.1.2.4. Access to telecommunications networks, computers, and libraries at times convenient to active duty personnel.

E3.1.3. In operating its programs, each Military Service shall:

E3.1.3.1. Provide to newly assigned personnel, as part of their orientation to each new installation, information about voluntary education programs available at that installation.

E3.1.3.2. Maintain participants' educational records showing educational accomplishments, military training, education, and career goals.

E3.1.3.3. Provide for the continuing professional development of their education services staff, including the participation of field staff in conferences, symposiums, and workshops.

E3.1.3.4. In the absence of written agreements to the contrary, provide educational services, including tuition assistance and testing, to personnel of other Services (including the Coast Guard) who are assigned for duty at installations of the host-Service. However, the Department of Transportation is responsible for tuition assistance and testing costs for Coast Guard personnel, except when the Coast Guard is operating as a Military Service in the Department of the Navy.

E3.1.3.5. Continually assess the state of its voluntary education programs and periodically conduct a formal needs assessment to ensure that the best possible programs are available to their members at each installation. A needs assessment is the foundation for establishing meaningful, relevant, and cost-effective educational programs and services. Though the assessment of the appropriateness of installation-based voluntary education programs may be conducted only periodically, it is essential that a formal needs assessment be conducted if there is a significant change in the demographic profile of the base population.

E3.1.4. Adult family members of active duty personnel, DoD civilian employees, members of the Reserve Components, retirees, and adult family members of DoD

civilian employees, members of the Reserve Components, and retirees may be allowed to participate in installation postsecondary educational programs on a space-available basis.

E3.1.5. At locations where an educational program that is offered on an installation is not otherwise conveniently available outside the installation, civilians who are not directly employed by the Department of Defense or other Federal Agencies and who are not family members of DoD personnel may be allowed to participate in installation educational programs. While such participation contributes to positive community relations, participation must be on a student-funded, space-available basis, and only after the registration of active duty personnel, civilian employees, and family members. Participation may also be subject to the terms of Status of Forces or other regulating agreements.

E3.1.6. Education Centers and Navy Campus offices should maintain liaison with appropriate State planning agencies and coordinating councils to ensure that planning agencies for continuing, adult or postsecondary education are aware of the educational needs of military personnel located within their jurisdictions.

E4. ENCLOSURE 4

PROCEDURES FOR OBTAINING ON-BASE VOLUNTARY EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

E4.1.1. To obtain viable educational programs on a military installation, the appropriate military installation official shall communicate the installation's educational needs to a variety of potential providers.

E4.1.2. A military installation seeking to obtain educational programs shall provide the following information to interested providers:

E4.1.2.1. The level of instruction desired and specific degree programs being sought.

E4.1.2.2. A demographic profile of the installation population and probable volume of participation in the program.

E4.1.2.3. Facilities, equipment and supporting services that the installation will provide without charge.

E4.1.2.4. A copy of this Instruction.

E4.1.2.5. Special requirements such as:

E4.1.2.5.1. Format (i.e., evening or weekend classes), independent study, short seminar, or other mode of delivery of instruction.

E4.1.2.5.2. Unique scheduling problems related to the operational mission of the installation.

E4.1.2.5.3. Any installation restrictions, limitations, and special considerations relevant to using an alternate delivery system (distance learning).

E4.1.3. In addition to the information in paragraph E4.1.2. above, a military installation seeking to use alternate modes for the delivery of instruction shall inform potential providers about the following:

E4.1.3.1. Available computer hardware and supporting equipment.

E4.1.3.2. Availability of space and level of security that can be expected.

E4.1.3.3. Electrical, satellite, and network capabilities at the site.

E4.1.4. A Military Service considering an alternate delivery provider shall ascertain:

E4.1.4.1. If students will need special training or orientation and, if so, how students will receive such orientation.

E4.1.4.2. What electronic equipment and technical support are necessary at local sites.

E4.1.4.3. If it will be necessary to have on-site facilitators.

E4.1.5. In evaluating proposals from potential providers, preference shall be given to those that meet the following criteria:

E4.1.5.1. Programs satisfy objectives defined by the most recent needs assessment.

E4.1.5.2. Programs, courses, and completion requirements are the same as those on the provider's home campus.

E4.1.5.3. The institution granting undergraduate academic credit is a member of Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges (SOC) and adheres to SOC principles regarding the transferability of credit and the awarding of credit for military training and experience.

E4.1.5.4. Tuition costs and related policies are consistent with those of other providers.

E4.1.5.5. The provider is prepared to offer academic counseling and flexibility in accommodating special military schedules.

E4.1.6. In evaluating proposals from potential alternative delivery providers, preference shall be given to those that meet the following additional criteria:

E4.1.6.1. Documentation shows that courses offered using the alternative delivery mode have been used successfully for at least 2 years.

E4.1.6.2. The program and delivery method address the needs of the population to be served.

E4.1.6.3. Support systems exist to back up the delivery method.

E4.1.7. In establishing on-base programs, appropriate government officials shall seek favorable tuition rates, student services and instructional support from providers.

E5. ENCLOSURE 5

MINIMUM CRITERIA FOR SELECTING INSTITUTIONS TO DELIVER HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES ON MILITARY

E5.1.1. To be selected, institutions must:

E5.1.1.1. Be chartered or licensed by a State government or the Federal Government, and have State approval for the use of veterans' educational benefits for the courses to be offered.

E5.1.1.2. Be accredited by an agency recognized by the Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, or a successor organization.

E5.1.1.3. Conduct programs only from among those offered or authorized by the main (home) campus in accordance with standard procedures for authorization of degree programs by the institution.

E5.1.1.4. Ensure main campus approval in faculty selection, assignment, and orientation; and participation in monitoring and evaluation of programs. Adjunct or part-time faculty shall possess the same or equivalent qualifications as full-time, permanent faculty members.

E5.1.1.5. Conduct on-installation courses that carry identical credit values, represent the same content and experience, and use the same student evaluation procedures as courses on the main campus.

E5.1.1.6. Maintain the same admission and graduation standards as exist for the same programs on the main campus, and include credits from courses taken off-campus in establishing academic residency to meet degree requirements.

E5.1.1.7. Provide library and other reference and research resources, in either print or computer format, that are appropriate and necessary to support course offerings.

E5.1.1.8. Establish procedures to maintain regular communication between main campus-based faculty and administrators and off-campus representatives and faculty. (Any institution's proposal must specify these procedures.)

E5.1.1.9. Provide students with regular and accessible counseling services.

E5.1.1.10. Charge tuition and fees that are not more than those charged to nonmilitary students. High enrollment courses must be used to underwrite the expense of offering small, elective, and laboratory courses germane to the degree program.

E5.1.1.11. Have established policies for awarding credit for military training by examinations, experiential learning, and courses completed using modes of delivery other than instructor- delivered, on-site classroom instruction.

E6. ENCLOSURE 6

OTHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR SERVICE MEMBERS AND THEIR ADULT FAMILY MEMBERS

E6.1. HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM

E6.1.1. All Service members with less than a high school education shall have the opportunity to attain a high school diploma or its equivalent.

E6.1.2. Neither a Military Service nor DANTES shall issue a certificate or similar document to Service members based on performance on high school equivalency tests. Military Services shall recognize attainment of high school completion or equivalency only after a State- or territory-approved agency has awarded the appropriate credential.

E6.1.3. The Military Services shall pay 100 percent of the cost of high school equivalency instruction or proficiency testing and credentialing.

E6.1.4. High school diploma programs must be delivered by institutions that are accredited by a regional accrediting body or recognized by a State's secondary school authority.

E6.2. ACADEMIC SKILLS PROGRAMS

E6.2.1. The Military Services shall provide academic skills programs for military personnel.

E6.2.2. The Military Services should determine the appropriate level of academic skills mastery that their members need to enhance job performance and ensure continued opportunity for educational growth and career advancement. Programs should support these determined needs.

E6.3. ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR MILITARY PERSONNEL AND THEIR ADULT FAMILY MEMBERS OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES

E6.3.1. In accordance with Section 1073 of Pub. L. 104-106 (reference (c)), Services are authorized to spend appropriated funds for certain adult education programs for military personnel and their dependents outside the United States. Such

programs:

E6.3.1.1. Enable adults to acquire educational skills necessary for literate functioning;

E6.3.1.2. Provide these adults with sufficient basic education to enable them to benefit from job training and retraining programs and obtain and retain productive employment;

E6.3.1.3. Enable adults who so desire to continue their education to at least the level of completion of secondary school.

E7. ENCLOSURE 7
RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DANTES

E7.1. THE MISSION AND FUNCTION OF THE DANTES

E7.1.1. DANTES' mission is to support the off-duty, voluntary education programs of the Department of Defense and to conduct special projects and developmental activities in support of education-related functions of the Department.

E7.1.2. DANTES' functions include the following:

E7.1.2.1. Manage the examination and certification programs.

E7.1.2.2. Manage the contract and functions related to the evaluation of educational experiences in the Armed Services.

E7.1.2.3. Manage the SOC program contract and related functions.

E7.1.2.4. Manage an independent study support system.

E7.1.2.5. Establish and maintain a DoD Voluntary Education presence on the Internet. Maintain necessary infrastructure to ensure that information on the Internet is current and available to agency personnel, the public, and others.

E7.1.2.6. Upon request, issue transcripts for the United States Armed Forces Institute and the examination and certification programs.

E7.1.2.7. Manage the contract through which former Department of Defense Dependents Schools students can obtain copies of archived transcripts.

E7.1.2.8. Manage the contract that provides for periodic third-party reviews of installation educational programs (MIVER).

E7.1.2.9. Procure or develop and distribute educational materials, reference books, counseling publications, educational software, and key educational resource information.

E7.1.2.10. Serve as the American Forces Information Service's point of contact for information on voluntary education programs for military personnel.

E7.1.2.11. Monitor new technological developments, provide reports and recommendations on educational innovations, and conduct special projects as requested by the Services.

E7.1.2.12. Conduct staff development and training on DANTES' policies, procedures and practices related to voluntary education programs, and provide additional training as requested by the Services.

E7.1.2.13. Provide support, as requested, to DoD and Services' Quality of Life and Transition support programs.

E7.1.2.14. Provide other support in mission areas as directed by policy guidance issued by the ASD (FMP).

E7.2. THE ROLE OF THE DANTES

E7.2.1. DANTES' role is to assist the Services with providing high quality and valuable educational opportunities for Service members, DoD personnel, and family members; and to assist personnel in achieving professional and personal educational objectives. This role includes the consolidated management of certain programs to prevent duplication of effort among the Services. Through its activities, DANTES supports recruitment, retention, and transition efforts of the Department of Defense.

E7.2.2. The Director, DANTES, is authorized to maintain liaison with education services officials of the Military Services, and appropriate Federal and State agencies and educational associations, in matters related to the DANTES mission and assigned functions.

E7.3. POLICY CONTROL OF THE DANTES

E7.3.1. Policy guidance for the DANTES is issued annually by the ASD(FMP). The guidance shall be transmitted to DANTES through the Executive Agent (Secretary of the Navy).

E7.3.2. Policy recommendations shall be developed with the advice of the Interservice Voluntary Education Working Group acting in the capacity of the DANTES Working Group. The Director, DANTES, shall serve as the Executive Secretary of the DANTES Working Group and prepare the agenda and minutes of

meetings.

E7.3.3. The Director, DANTES shall report to the ASD(FMP), or designee, on DANTES plans, operations, and activities.